

URBAN DISTRICT OF
BRIERFIELD.

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE

Year ending December 31st, 1910,

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH


(J. S. WILSON, M.B., C.M.),

AND

Surveyor & Sanitary Inspector,

(B. HALSTEAD),

Member of the Incorporated Association of Municipal and County
Engineers, and Associate of the Royal Sanitary Institute.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2017 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b28952881>

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1910.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DISTRICT
COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in submitting for your consideration my seventh Annual Report on the health and sanitation of the district.

The population of the township at the last census in 1901 was 7,288. I estimate it to be in the middle of the year 8,600, and have calculated my statistics on that basis.

From Table A you will be able to compare the birth-rates, death-rates, and zymotic death-rates for the last five years.

TABLE A.

	1910.	1 09.	1908.	1907.	1906.
Birth-rate	19·65	21·39	22·85	21·83	21·79
Death-rate	10 23	11·74	14·2	12·5	13·07
Zymotic Death-rate	1·04	0·80	1·6	0·6	2·8
Phthisis Death-rate	0·81	1·5	1·6	1·5	1·2
Respiratory Death-rate	1·97	2·2	3·2	4·7	4·2

BIRTHS.

During the year there were 167 births—73 males and 94 females. Of these 9 were illegitimate—5 females and 4 males. This gives a birth-rate of 19·65, compared to 21·39 for last year. This is the lowest birth-rate recorded in Brierfield.

DEATHS.

During the year there were 88 deaths—37 males and 51 females. This is equivalent to an annual death-rate of 10.2. There were 29 deaths among children under 5 years of age, equal to 32.9 per cent. of the total deaths. This is a very low death-rate.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

The rate of deaths under 1 year to 1,000 births is 137. They were distributed in the following ages:—

6 under 1 month.

9 over 1 month and under 6 months.

8 over 6 months and under 1 year.

From Table B you will see the cause of death in each case.

TABLE B.

	Bronchitis	Diarrhoeal Diseases.	Wasting Diseases.	Whooping Cough.	Pneumonia.	Tuberculous Meningitis.	Other Causes	Total.
Under 1 month .....	...	...	5	...	...	...	1	6
1 month and under 6 months .....	...	5	1	...	3	...	...	9
6 months and under 12 months ...	2	1	...	1	2	1	1	8
Total...	2	6	6	1	5	1	2	23

In Table C taken from Dr. Sergeant's Report you will see the comparative death-rate of children under 1 year in Brierfield, in the Urban and Rural Districts of Lancashire, and England and Wales.

TABLE C.

	1910	1909	1908	1907	1906
Brierfield	137	98	151	151	164
Rural Districts { Lancs. }	—	87	97	96	109
Urban Districts { Lancs. }	—	119	136	129	143
England and Wales	—	109	121	118	133

TABLE D.

CAUSES OF, AND AGES AT, DEATH DURING 1910.

CAUSES OF DEATH. 1	Deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents" whether occurring in or beyond the district.						
	All ages 2	Under 1 year 3	1 and under 5 4	5 and under 15 5	15 and under 25 6	25 and under 65 7	65 and up wards 8
Scarlet Fever	1		1				
Whooping-cough	1	1					
Diarrhoea	3	2	1				
Enteritis	3	3					
Gastritis	1	1					
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis) ...	7			1	1	5	
Other Tuberculous Diseases ...	3	1	1		1		
Cancer, malignant disease ...	5					5	
Bronchitis	6	2				2	2
Pneumonia	11	5				6	
Alcoholism, Cirrhosis of Liver	1					1	
Diseases and accidents of parturition... ..	1	1					
Heart Diseases	14		1	1		9	3
Infantile Complaints	6	6					
Cerebral Hæmorrhage... ..	9					5	4
Senile Decay	4						4
All other Causes	12	1	2		1	8	
All Causes	83	23	6	2	2	41	13

TABLE E.

VITAL STATISTICS OF WHOLE DISTRICT DURING 1910 AND
PREVIOUS YEARS.

Year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births.		Total Deaths Registered in District.						Deaths in Public Institutions beyond District.		Nett Deaths all ages.	
		No.	Rate.	No.	Rate.	No.	Rate.	No.	Rate.	No.	Rate.	No.	Rate.
1900	7200 ...	214	29·72	... 22	102·71	... 84	11·66	... —	...	84	11·66		
1901	7300 ...	206	28·20	... 40	194·17	... 116	15·89	... —	...	116	15·89		
1902	7400 ...	183	24·73	... 25	137·10	... 98	13·24	... —	...	98	13·24		
1903	7500 ...	202	26·93	... 32	158·41	... 106	14·13	... —	...	106	14·13		
1904	7600 ...	174	22·89	... 26	149·42	... 120	15·78	... —	...	120	15·78		
1905	7700 ...	173	22·46	... 27	156·06	... 102	13·24	... 2	...	104	13·50		
1906	7800 ...	170	21·79	... 28	164·70	... 102	13·07	... —	...	102	13·07		
1907	8200 ...	179	21·83	... 27	151·00	... 91	11·09	... 12	...	103	12·56		
1908	8400 ...	192	22·85	... 29	151·04	... 113	13·45	... 7	...	120	14·28		
1909	8600 ...	184	21·39	... 18	97·88	... 97	11·27	... 4	...	101	11·74		
Averages for years 1900 — 1909	7770 ..	187·7	24·15	... 27·4	145·97	... 102·9	13·24	... —	...	105·40	13·56		
1910	8600 ...	167	19·65	... 23	137	... 77	8·95	... 11	...	88	10·23		

As the Census is to be taken in April, and as the increase of population is small, I have based my statistics on the population of last year. .

The birth-rate, I regret to say, is the lowest recorded. There has been practically a continuous decline every year during the last ten years. This is general throughout England, with the exception of the mining districts. There is little doubt parents are as able physically to propagate their species as ever they have been, but many refuse to accept the cares and responsibilities of maternity. The middle classes in this respect are much to blame.

The lower classes, the submerged tenth, the degenerates — in fact, all those least able to rear children and to realise the great responsibility of educating their children to become good citizens, have the largest families. On the other hand, more care is taken of children than formerly; the State, understanding its obligations, is making more determined efforts to reduce the infantile mortality, and thus to some extent mitigate the evil.

The infantile death-rate is higher this year than last. It was abnormally low last year—98 to 1,000 births. During the last quarter 12 children died, pneumonia and diarrhoeal diseases being responsible for the majority of the deaths.

The Notification of Births Act has been in operation now for some nine months. During this period there were 8 still-born children. The Nurse visits all cases notified by midwives and notes that due attention is paid to the mother. She also visits any case when instructed to do so by the doctor in charge. A second, and, if required, a third visit is paid during the puerperium, and the mother instructed in the care and management of her child. I think parents generally much appreciate this arrangement.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

There have been 17 cases of infectious diseases notified during the year:—Scarlet fever, 9 cases; diphtheria, 1 case; typhoid fever, 4 cases; and erysipelas, 1 case. Four cases were removed to the Sanatorium.

A circular was received from the Local Government Board, dated August 15th, 1910, sanctioning the provision of diphtheria antitoxin and of medical attendance in connection therewith. This circular was considered by your Sanitary Committee and adopted.

During the year there has been a small outbreak of typhoid fever. The first case was notified on November 4th, and the last case was on January 4th of this year. All the cases received milk from one dairy. This dairy, at my request, was visited by the Medical Officer of Health and the Sanitary Inspector of the district and careful investigations made; nothing definite was discovered, though it was known that at farm near by two fatal cases had occurred a few months previously. Up to the present time there have been five cases notified; three are at present in the Sanatorium. There have been no deaths.

In November of last year I was instructed by the Sanitary Committee to prepare some handbills giving in a graphic manner the causes leading to consumption, the safeguards against it, and the precautions to be taken by anyone suffering from that disease. This has been done, and two thousands pictorial cards have been received and are being distributed throughout the township; while several large posters have been hung in the public schools and other places.

From Table F you will be able to compare the number of infectious diseases notified during the last five years.

TABLE F.

	1910	1909	1908	1907	1906
Scarlet Fever	9	9	9	16	14
Diphtheria.....	1	1	1	2	16
Typhoid	4	0	1	1	3
Erysipelas	3	7	4	5	6
Puerperal Fever	0	1	0	0	0
	<hr/> 17	<hr/> 18	<hr/> 15	<hr/> 24	<hr/> 39

VACCINATION.

From Table G you will see the number of children vaccinated successfully and the number of exemptions granted.

TABLE G.

	Births.	Public Vaccinations.	Private Vaccinations.	Exemption Certificates.
1910	167	..... 29	..... 6	..... 120
1909	184	..... 54	..... 6	..... 116
1908	192	..... 59	..... 6	..... 121
1907	179	..... 39	..... 11	..... 76
1906	170	..... 69	..... 12	..... 81

THE AREA OF THE DISTRICT, &c.

The area of the district is 787 acres; the subsoil clayey and damp, but from its sloping situation there is a direct fall of at least 500 feet from Marsden Heights to Pendle Water. It lends itself very readily to drainage, and neutralises to some

extent the nature of the soil. The cultivated land in the vicinity is all pasturage and meadow, the produce from it being milk, butter, and eggs.

THE WATER SUPPLY.

A new ten-inch main has been laid down from Nelson to the centre of Brierfield, so that one should have no more complaints of insufficient pressure. It is of good quality. Those residing in Marsden Heights have to depend on spring water ; it is good and plentiful.

A circular was received from the Local Government Board, dated Sept. 3rd, re the Housing and Town Planning Act. The set of books required have been got and inspection of the houses commenced. To make a complete examination of every house in the district will entail a good deal of extra work, and this really ought to be done. In the circular referred to there occurs the following paragraph:—"In the opinion of the Board the Inspector of Nuisances should almost invariably be the officer to act under the direction and supervision of the Medical Officer of Health for the purposes of the Housing (Inspection of Districts) Regulations, 1910, and for this purpose the Board will be prepared to sanction a reasonable increase of the salary of the Inspector of Nuisances.

From Table H you will see the inspections made in connection with factories and workshops.

TABLE H.

Premises.					Number of Inspections.	Number of Written Notices	
(1)					(2)	(3)	
FACTORIES	...	...	...	...	41	.....	4
WORKSHOPS	...	...	...	...	26	.....	2
					—	—	
Total				...	67	.....	6

The bake-houses and slaughter-houses have been inspected periodically; they are in the main in good condition.

Dairies and cow-sheds have been inspected. The regulations of the Local Government Board have been adopted and sanction received, but they have not been advertised, and are therefore not yet in operation. This wants your early attention.

I have sent monthly returns of the infectious diseases and the mortality of the district to the Lancashire County Council, the Joint Hospital Board, and quarterly reports to your Council.

During the year I have made systematic inspections of the district.

I am indebted to the sanitary staff for so willingly supplying me with the required statistics.

Appended is Mr. Halstead's report of the work done in the Sanitary and Surveyor's Department.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

J. S. WILSON.

REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR.

The following is a summary of the Nuisances dealt with during the year:—

Defective and untrapped drains	22
Defective waste water closets	53
Defective ashpits	3
Miscellaneous	10
	<hr/>
	88

25 written notices were served in connection with the above, and in other cases the owners were personally interviewed, and as a rule readily agreed to remedy the defects complained of.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.

Six slaughter-houses were again registered during the year. Several complaints having been made about the refuse remaining too long about the premises and some difficulty experienced by the occupiers in disposing of the same, negotiations were commenced with a view to the Council undertaking to remove the refuse and have it destroyed at the Nelson Destructor Works. After several interviews, terms were arranged with five of the occupiers, and so far the arrangement has been very satisfactory.

CANAL BOATS.

Eight inspections were made during the year, and in each case they were found to comply with the regulations.

BAKEHOUSES.

These have been kept in a satisfactory condition during the year, the occupiers showing a desire that the food should be prepared under clean conditions.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.

There seems to be some doubt as to whether the regulations that were adopted some time ago have been properly adver-

tised as required by the Act. I think it is time this matter was cleared up, so that if it is necessary to take any action under them we shall be in order. They have been kept in a fairly satisfactory condition during the year.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

These have been periodically visited and several notices served with regard to flushing of closets. New arrangements have been adopted at two of the mills, and it is hoped that they will prove more satisfactory in the future.

SCAVENGING.

Owing to the exhaustion of the various tips, more refuse has been taken to Nelson than in any previous year; in fact, practically all the refuse is now being destroyed at the Nelson Destructor Works. The total for this year is 997 tons against 796 last year.

In addition, 479 loads of ashes were tipped at the Sewage Works in the early part of the year.

149 loads of excreta have been removed from pail and tank closets.

REPORT OF THE SURVEYOR.

Area of the District, 787 acres. Estimated population, 8,600.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DISTRICT
COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present to you my tenth Annual Report of the work in the Surveyor's Department for the year 1910.

Plans relating to the following buildings have been approved during the year:—Cottages, 29; Villas, 4; alterations to existing buildings, 7; extension to joiner's workshop, 1.

PRIVATE STREET IMPROVEMENTS.

Private street works to the amount of £1,047 18s. 10d. were completed and apportioned early in the year. There are now 64 front streets and 48 back streets paved and sewered. The total length of front streets paved amounts to 6 miles 1 furlong 84 yards, and back streets, 1 mile 4 furlongs 140 yards.

There are 8 miles 1 furlong 166 yards of sewers; 151 manholes, 81 lampholes, and 817 gullies within the district.

MAIN ROAD.

The Main Road has been disturbed by the laying of a traction cable from the Reedley Boundary to the centre, and also a 10in. water main from Nelson. During the reinstatement of the roadway, opportunity was taken to carry out a few repairs.

Further repairs to the channels are necessary, and the length of road opposite Oak Street, which is paved by local setts, will require attention during the coming year.

SECONDARY ROADS.

50 tons of granite and 400 tons of limestone have been used in repairing these roads during the year.

OTHER ROADS.

A number of the ordinary roads in the district require repairing, and allowance ought to be made in the estimates for the coming year in order that this work can be carried out. We have purchased a small tar boiler during the past year, and this will enable us to carry out small repairs ourselves.

194 loads of detritus from gullies, and 159 loads of road scrapings have been tipped at the Sewage Works; 570 loads of road sweepings carted on to farm land; 616 loads of snow to various tips; and 96 loads of ashes and limestone dust spread upon the streets and footpaths during frost.

SEWAGE WORKS.

460 loads of ashes have been carted to the works for replenishing the contact beds. The ashes on the surface of the second contact beds for a depth of 12 inches have been removed and replaced by the ashes washed during the refilling of the first contact beds. This has not proved to be a benefit for any lengthened period, as the second contact beds are now in a very unsatisfactory state, and it will soon be necessary to remove the ashes entirely. The flow of sewage has also increased considerably during the last few years, and extensions to the tanks and contact beds must be undertaken before very long. A Sub-Committee has been appointed and they have visited Nelson, Rishton, Darwen, and Todmorden, in order to see what is being accomplished in other towns, and will present their report in due course.

920 loads of sludge have been removed from the Septic and Detritus tanks.

ELECTRICITY.

The following table shows the consumption of electricity for the last five years:—

	1906	1907.	1908.	1909.	1910.
Ordinary consumers ...	12190	11704	14458	22757	27906
Motors	2064	2206	4357	5321	5948
Radiator	689	—	—	—	—
Street Lighting	5000	4720	217	—	—
Totals	19943	18630	19032	28078	33854

STREET LIGHTING.

We have now 230 street lamps, against 223 last year. The number of mantles used per lamp was 7.60 against 7.73 in 1909. The average on the Main Road is 9.31 against 10.6 last year. We have fixed a number of inverted lights during the closing months of the year, and so far they have given very good results.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

B. HALSTEAD.